Interview with Cliff Southard

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project Information Series

CLIFF SOUTHARD

Interviewed by: Pat E. Nieburg

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Q: This is February 25, 1988. We are at the house of Cliff Southard in his Bethesda home. Cliff joined the Agency in 1955.

SOUTHARD: 1952

Some Special Events In Southard's Career

Q: In 1952. The interviewer is Pat Nieburg. Cliff, if we go back over your experiences in the foreign service, what were some of the remarkable events you have faced and what you would like to tell us a little bit about the early days and your experiences.

SOUTHARD: You say “remarkable” events. That sounds a little grand. I cannot really think of “remarkable” things. I was in the Philippines when Aquino was assassinated. I was in Burma at the time of the mob attacks upon the Chinese Embassy—during the times of the “little red book” riots which killed 120 Chinese/Burmese in the country.

I was in the Philippines when Vice President Nixon made a triumphal visit in 1956. It drew the biggest crowd of people I have ever seen in my life. Japan, Bobby Kennedy made a

whirlwind tour of Japan, talking to youth groups and labor groups. I was involved in that. Off hand, I cannot think of any other—I am sure there are. They are just not coming to me.

Summary Of Assignments During Career

Q: Cliff, this is perfectly fine. These seem like some very interesting events. Maybe what we ought to do is start a little bit chronologically, because, when you say "1952", that, for the Far East, in the experience of USIA, goes back quite a long way. Can we start maybe with your first foreign service assignment? And, where was it?

SOUTHARD: I came into the Agency —actually, it was the Department of State—in 1952. In 1953, when USIA was formed, I went into USIA. I went to the Philippines in 1955 as publications officer for USIS-Philippines. Let me see, do you want me to do a chronology now, or just —

Then it was after two and a half years in the Philippines, I came back to Washington as a desk officer for Far East regional affairs and then later for Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Cambodia. In 1960, I came back to the old ICS, Information Center Service, where I was deputy in what was then the publication division. It was actually the book division—book programs division.

In 1966 I went to Burma as country public affairs officer. I was there for three and a half years. I came back in 1969 and was chief of foreign service personnel. In the summer of 1971 I became the deputy area director the East Asia and the Pacific; deputy to John Reinhardt who was then the area director. Then, as you know, we were together in 1972 and 1973 in the senior seminar on foreign policy.

In 1973 I went to Nigeria as country public affairs officer. I came back in 1974. I had a little heart problem down there. But, I came back to work in the inspection staff for a couple of years and then I was Harold Schneidman's deputy in ICA. In 1977 I went back to the

inspection staff as the associate chief inspector with Dan Oleksiw. In 1978, I became the chief inspector.

In 1940, I went to the Philippines as country public affairs officer, and was there until 1984, when I came back to Washington. I was director of the press and publications service the last year before I retired. I retired in March of 1985.

First Overseas Assignment: Philippines, 1955

Q: You have had a very full career, Cliff. Let me take you back, through to your early assignment in the Philippines. Your first assignment to be correct. What was it like? What were you doing? What were you trying to achieve on that particular post?

Tremendous Publications Output In Philippines In 1950's

SOUTHARD: I was the publications officer. The large amount of material we produced in those days is hard to imagine today. I had mentioned earlier I was the country public affairs officer in the Philippines in 1980, 25 years after I had gone there as publications officer in 1955. In 1955, USIS-Philippines spent more money and produced more printed material than the entire East Asian regional area produced in 1980. In 1955, we were very print oriented.

For example, in Manila, I edited three magazines. We had a weekly news review. We had the monthly Free World—the Philippine edition of the Free World magazine, then we had a quarterly exchange magazine. In addition to putting out those three magazines, we produced about a pamphlet a week the year around. We produced posters, maybe a poster every two or three weeks.

We had a mailing list that when I arrived there were something like 45,000 names. We were printing 150,000 copies of Free World magazine. Again, in 1980, the largest circulation magazine we had in the Philippines was Dialogue—4,000 copies.

Q: Cliff, thinking back to 1955 and the enormous amount of printed material that you produced, what were some of the themes that you covered? What were they supposed to convey?

USIS Objective In Philippines In 1950's

SOUTHARD: Within the Philippines, we were interested in supporting our military installations there. A fair amount of the material was supportive of our bases at Clark Field, Sangley Point and Subic Bay. Sangley, that was the U.S. Naval Base on Manila Bay, across the bay from the city of Manila.

We obviously were interested in encouraging the development of the Philippines—supporting the economic development—economic assistance programs. We were especially interested in building support for the Southeast Asia treaty organization, which was formed in 1956. The Philippines was one of the members.

We did one thing—had one project that was unlike that which I think you would find any place else in the world. The Filipinos had always suffered—from among their colleagues in Asia and elsewhere in the world—from being thought of as the little running dogs of the Americans.

A lot of people really never accepted the fact that they were an independent country. So, it was in our interests to establish the Philippines “as” an independent country, operating on its own.

In support of that, the Philippine government itself established in 1956, something called the Philippine information agency, which was patterned very much after our own Agency. The only difference is, I think they had about five people on the payroll. Ours is somewhat larger!

One of our country plan projects was to support this Philippine information agency. They had nothing. They had no capability for printing. They had very little editorial capability. They could not make movies.

So, USIS-Manila assisted them in producing things. In my office—in the publications office—we produced a series of seven or eight different pamphlets, each dealing with a facet of Philippine culture, which would be written by Philippine experts chosen by the Philippine information agency. We would set the thing in type, lay it out and send it down to the regional service center for printing.

In some cases, we even pouched them to our American embassies in foreign countries to be passed on to the Filipinos, because they could not afford to ship these things.

Differences Between Philippine Operations In 1950's And 1980's

Q: Cliff, a little while ago, you made a comparison about coming back 25 years later, in terms of the volume of material that the post produced. Can you give us an impression? How large an operation was the USIS Philippine operation? How many Americans? How many Filipinos? How extensive and what was the influence?

SOUTHARD: It is interesting and a little sad to think, in a way, that the size of the organization in 1955, when I went there, varies very little from the size of the organization today, in terms of personnel. We had about ten or eleven officers in 1955. In the early 1980's we had not ten or eleven officers. In 1955 we had not quite 100 Filipino employees and three branch posts. In the 1980's, we have about 80 Filipino employees and two branch posts. In terms of material output, the people there today, simply do not produce as much material as we did then. The whole direction of the program is different in the 1980's than it was in the 1950's

Q: Are you saying in effect that, while in the 1950's we were relying very much on individual products to convey our message, in the 1980's, it was more a question of personal contacts?

SOUTHARD: More personal contact, of course. Television did not exist in the 1950's. Getting tapes placed on television is a very big thing in the 1980's and we do it quite well.

In the 1950's, we produced documentary films and showed them in mobile units all around the country. The mobile unit and use of films has practically dropped to nothing.

I suppose, and certainly I think, a greater reliance on personal contact in the 1980's then there was before—and the other big thing, of course, more reliance upon the imported speaker. The specialist coming in to speak. We seldom had speakers in the 1950's. Hardly ever did we have somebody come in.

Q: I cannot help but wonder, from your statement. We had so many people in the 1950's and we had almost the same amount of people in the 1980's. Haven't we changed?

The situation must have changed in the Philippines. Requirements must have changed, and, so must the requirements for the resources. Yet, from what you are trying to tell me, or at least, what I hear, is that we as an organization really have stayed very much the same, though our surroundings may have changed. Is that good? Is this bad? Or, am I mistaken?

SOUTHARD: To restate, the physical size of the organization has not changed very much. You cannot use dollars, because today's dollars are unlike the 1950's dollars. In those things which are comparable, people and branch posts, you can say that there has been very little change in the size of the organization. As a matter of fact, there has been not a great deal of change in the focus, in the effort of the organization.

We are still primarily supporting the continued presence of our bases there and surprisingly, some of the same problems, vis-a-vis, the bases, are seen today as they were seen 25 years ago, and I am sure will be seen ten years from now.

Q: From your observation though, and you are one of the few people who have served at the same post with a considerable time interval which gives you the tremendous advantage of a comparison.

American Image In Philippines Still High And Favorable

When you first came to the Philippines, I would assume you came to basically a favorable, friendly climate for USIA to operate. What was it like 25 years later? Was it changed for the better or for the worse? Could you make that comparison for me?

SOUTHARD: Actually, in terms of the range of experience, I first went to the Philippines in 1945 as a young ensign in the U.S. Navy, just as the war ended. So, I saw the Philippines in 1945, 1955 to 1958 and then in the early 1980's. One thing continues throughout—one thing that really impressed me—and that is that the image of the United States is terribly, terribly good in the Philippines. I do not think there are many places in the world where Americans are more highly regarded than in the Philippines.

Even over these many years, irritations in the relationship, some economic, some relating to the bases, the fact remains that the Filipinos look upon the U.S. as their closest friends. Whether the USIS had anything to do with that, I am not sure. We certainly—the U.S.—certainly has a very high image.

Q: Retained it to this day?

SOUTHARD: Well, I haven't been there for eighteen months. I was back again in 1986. This was after the Aquino revolution. I saw little in 1986 that would lead me to believe that this basic attitude of the people has changed much.

USIS Acceptance In Embassy Vastly Improved Over 1950's

Q: Let me ask you an insider's question, if I may. In 1955, and the 1980's when you were there, was there a change in the relationship between USIS and the Embassy? Was there more or less appreciation or cooperation with the work and the necessities of USIS?

SOUTHARD: As you may remember in the 1950's, the USIS officers were staff employees, organizationally not much different—our personnel system—treated pretty much like a general services officer or some of the more clerical types around the Embassy—the people who mowed the lawns and all that. We were not an integral part of the Embassy. I think in the first two and a half years, I saw the American ambassador no more than two or three times.

Q: You were a rather junior officer?

SOUTHARD: Very junior.

Q: How about the PAO?

SOUTHARD: The PAO, of course, would go to his staff meetings. There was not a great meshing of the two organizations. I had the feeling, and I am sure my colleagues did too, that we were simply not thought of as equals by the FSO's.

A friend of mine who was there at that time, now retired, Phil DiTommaso, got very upset about the feeling that he experienced in his dealings with FSO's in the Embassy. He took it upon himself to keep a running index—he kept track—of the postgraduate degrees held by the USIS officers and those that were held by the FSO's in the Embassy.

Each time that a transfer would take place, he would have a new index. Of course, the USIS people, in terms of advanced degrees, were always able to edge out the FSO's. We

had Ph.D. after Ph.D. as cultural officers. We had four cultural officers in a row who were Ph.D.'s. John Reinhardt was a Ph.D. as the lowest assistant cultural officer.

Phil had gone to Georgetown and had a foreign service degree from Georgetown. Most of his co-graduates went into the State Department. He came to USIA. He was always a little irked about that.

Of course, in the 1980's, USIS everywhere is certainly thought of as a very important cog in the Embassy. In fact, in many countries, USIS is about all the Embassy has to do any business with. The only asset—the only real asset—especially in countries like Africa.

Source And Attribution Of USIS Printed MaterialsIn 1950's

Q: Cliff, you mentioned the mountains of material, printed material that the post was printing at that particular time. Who was the publisher? Who was it attributed to and in whose name was it done? Was this all USIA?

SOUTHARD: As you may remember in those days, many USIS posts produced unattributable material. That is, we would use our resources, even our printing plant at RSC in Manila, to print pamphlets, booklets, etc. that were attributed to this labor organization, this youth organization or that other organization, as with the Philippine information agency, which I had mentioned earlier.

Many of the materials that we printed at the regional service center in Manila were attributed to Philippine organizations. Probably four out of ten of the pamphlet projects —I mentioned we did about a pamphlet a week—probably four out of ten of those were attributed to organizations other than the U.S. Information Service.

Q: Were you then job printers or job publishers so to speak?

SOUTHARD: In some cases, we would take material that had been prepared by a labor organization or by a farm organization, or a cooperative, and set it in type. Sometimes

they would come to us with something set in type and we would merely make the plates and print it. Sometimes we would help them write the material. We did much work with the Philippines Department of Defense's anticommunist psychological warfare programs.

Q: Cliff, one technical question. Were all these pamphlets printed in English or was it in Tagalog?

SOUTHARD: Some were in Tagalog, but most of it was in English. As you probably know, unattributed material was knocked out in 1966, as I remember, in a Senate—and I have forgotten which senator was involved—subcommittee. The Agency was directed to stop producing unattributed material and also to stop developing books in ICS's so called book development program, where we were stimulating the production of—the publication of—books by American commercial publishers, on subjects of interest to us.

Both of these programs, I thought, were pretty clever, pretty good, good propaganda.

Q: Looking back at it, would you think that, if a pamphlet or book for that matter, were attributed to USIA, it would lose its credibility or would lose its value?

SOUTHARD: It depends upon the message, but certainly there were some messages which could be more carefully and persuasively portrayed through other people's products than through our own. There are also certain messages that it would be unseemly for anyone but the U.S. government to take the attribution of. It depends upon the message.

Q: Cliff, that was quite awhile ago, when we were still in printed materials rather than in WorldNet and in television. Tell me, what was it like then in the 1980's.

The USIS Library In The Mid-'80's Was TheFoundation Of USIS Philippines Program

SOUTHARD: To begin with, we had never done a single WorldNet program by the time I left in 1984. They have done some since. Really the foundation of our effort in the 1980's

was an absolutely fantastic modern library and cultural center which we had in Manila—in the business section of Manila.

We had relocated it from an area that was not too well situated for patronage, certainly not for the patronage of the audience that we were seeking in the 1980's. We had an excellent designer who came out from the Agency and a very cooperative landlord.

We just turned out one of the most beautiful library institutions I have ever seen. It had fantastic patronage, probably running to 140,000 people per year—a good 10,000, 11,000, 12,000 people a month.

Q: What was the emphasis of the library in terms of the audience and content of the holdings?

SOUTHARD: Well, as you know, the libraries in the 1970's and 1980's became pretty much alike all over the world. They were not like the libraries in the 1950's, where the librarian would sit down and decide that she would order every book that she thought her clientele would enjoy. The clientele in the 1950's frequently included six year old children.

In Manila, you had to be eighteen years old to get into our library. The library had about 14,000 volumes ranging across the usual Agency selection—the five main disciplines that you find in all of the libraries. The only thing that distinguishes one library from another today is the size. The material in them is pretty much the same.

Q: In your experience, was the reference section, for example, of the library one of the key elements of its holdings?

SOUTHARD: Oh, yes, very much, and very, very significant I should say. We had a periodical room—one large room that had nothing but periodicals, about 300, and many, many tables to read. We had television monitors placed at various places around this

periodical reading room, where you could, with earphones, quietly watch videotaped recordings of just about anything you could imagine.

Q: Could you discern a change in the reading audience or the viewing audience, for that, with a change in the holding. In other words, what I am getting at, were there, for example, more business people coming into your library, rather than students who looked at belletristic holdings?

A Shift From Students To Business, Government,Communications Persons As Targets

SOUTHARD: I had mentioned earlier that we had moved to the business district—the Makati business district—from a site that was not too far from the university of the Philippines, but far enough to discourage a great deal of student usage. We frequently, all over the world, want to get close to the university.

Well, the land around most universities is pretty expensive. The rents are higher. We tend to go far enough away to a point where our budget can accommodate the rents. It is usually just a little bit too far.

This time, over the years, the business community became an increasingly important part of the audience and government officials, and communications media people were the more important elements—categories of our audience. This location in Makati was a happy melding of all of these categories that we were most interested in.

Surprisingly, even though we were located in Makati, probably ten miles away from the university of the Philippines, our university patronage increased from what it had been when we were located two miles from the university of the Philippines. This is because we placed it on popular bus routes, making it convenient to get there by bus or by jitney.

We had a nicer looking, more appealing institution. That made them come the twelve miles.

Q: Tell me, you had a major asset in the Philippines in the VOA relay station. Did you have any contact or any dealings with the Voice of America while you were there as PAO?

SOUTHARD: As you know, they were not responsible to the public affairs officer. We used to see the VOA officers frequently, but there was no broadcasting to the Philippines itself. We did not have continuing business associations with them.

I was aware of what they were doing. We would frequently be involved in providing some logistical assistance to them, because we were located in the Embassy and they were out in the boondocks. We did not have a relationship that had anything to do with programming.

Q: Cliff, there is so much travel and movement between the United States and the Philippines. There is a tremendous Filipino community in the United States. How did that effect your work and what did it do for the necessity of actually having the exchanges?

SOUTHARD: First, there is a great deal of travel back and forth. I think the consulate was issuing about 250,000 tourist visas a year. However, very few Filipino university level students are coming to the U.S. these days. In the immediate post war years, yes, but the cost of education in the U.S. and the relatively high quality of local university education combine to keep Filipino students in the Philippines.

There is hardly a Filipino family that does not have relatives in the United States. As a matter of fact, there is hardly a Filipino family that does not have a relative that either has served in the U. S. armed forces or is serving. There are many, many Filipinos in all branches o the U.S. military services today.

I had spoken earlier of the high regard that Filipinos have for the United States. Obviously, all of these factors play a part in that. The Filipino community in the United States is very interested in what goes on in the Philippines, and they tend to be, the vast majority

are, very supportive of U.S. policies and what we would perceive as the U.S. interest in Philippine/U.S. relations. It is certainly a plus from the information standpoint.

Q: May we interrupt for one question?

SOUTHARD: Yes.

Q: I see the plus. On the other hand, here is a large Filipino community and their experience in living in the United States might be somewhat at variance with what we are trying to portray in the Philippines. Has that made any difference, or has the Filipino experience in the United States, by in large, been a positive one?

SOUTHARD: The Filipino experience in the U.S. has been quite positive. Probably of the —I am groping for a percentage—I would say eighty percent of the Filipino employees of USIS in the 1950's, are now American citizens. During the time that I was there in the 1980's, about once every three or four months, one of our employees would take off to emigrate to the United States.

Effect Of U.S. Military Bases On U.S./Philippine Relations

Q: I would like to move, Cliff, if we may to another phase in the following area. When you were there in the 1980's, then it was already toward the end of President Marcos' tenure. These were already turbulent times. How did this effect your work?

SOUTHARD: We, the USIS continued with the same program that we had in earlier years. My guess is that the program we have today is not much different.

We tried our best not to be identified as a supporter of the Marcos government, the Marcos administration, in any way. I do not think we were any more identified with them than the Embassy was. Many Filipinos, however, believed that the Embassy was supportive of Marcos.

Q: I remember you telling me, Cliff, that you had some special problems in relation to our bases. There was some movement and a very strong vocal movement in the Philippines that wanted our bases removed. What was your relationship at that point with the military? What did you do in support, or what problems and solutions were created out of that situation?

SOUTHARD: The bases agreement with the Philippines is negotiated every five years. The clamor on the Philippine side against the bases, usually instigated by the government—whichever government it happens to be, just because it is a good negotiating ploy—begins maybe three years before the negotiations take place.

Then the negotiations take place. An agreement is reached, and then there is maybe a year more when people are fussing about the agreement that eventuated and then maybe you have a year of quiet. Really, you are either going into a negotiation or negotiating or coming out of a negotiation.

I was there in 1956 when we had negotiations and the themes used by the government—instigated by the government—were quite the same both times. They are all designed to increase economic assistance, or the military assistance that we give in return for the use of the bases—they call it rent. The rent goes up every time the bases agreement is renegotiated.

There are always arguments that the American service men are disruptive of the culture of the Philippines. They destroy Philippine womanhood. A few years ago, before the negotiation in 1983, we were bringing herpes and venereal diseases.

My guess is that the next time, in 1989, it may be AIDs. The American service men will be accused of bringing AIDs and, therefore, “Give us a little more money.”

Q: Cliff, specifically, how could you be supportive of such negotiations. Did you put out leaflets, pamphlets? Did you have tours of the bases? Can you describe a little bit, some of the activities that were involved in that?

Programs In Support Of Retaining U.S. Military Bases

SOUTHARD: We did put out several films and brochures. We had a program that went on year around, all the time I was there. We would take groups of—I remember taking a group of university presidents on a tour of the Constellation, the USS Constellation.

The Navy would really give us a grand show. They would helicopter us from the Embassy grounds to the deck of the carrier. We would stay the whole day—have breakfast and stay the whole day—watching the landings and takeoffs.

Usually we would go back by helicopter. One time actually a fixed wing aircraft took off with a bunch of journalists. That was the first time I ever had taken off from an aircraft carrier—catapulted off—I should say.

We took journalist groups, businessmen, university presidents as I had mentioned, university professors. This was a recurring project—every time an aircraft carrier would come in to Subic, we would be in touch with them and try to get a grand show.

The same, not so frequently, at Clark. We would take those who we deemed to be opinion makers or those who dealt immediately with opinion—newspaper journalists, television people—we would take them out on these tours.

Q: Also congressmen or political figures?

SOUTHARD: Yes, we took congressmen. We took government officials—Philippine government officials—who were not associated with the defense establishment. Of course,

the military officials of the Philippines are quite aware of how these bases are operated, because technically each base has a Philippine commanding officer.

Q: Was there an economic dimension to these negotiations and the disputes that arose, in the sense that so many jobs are being created? Did you exploit that in your —

SOUTHARD: Of course, this is the first thing you try to identify. What income would be lost in the Philippines—to the Philippine government. What would be the economic effects of the withdrawal of the bases?

The fact is only a relatively small minority of the Filipinos want to see those bases go. The fact also is that the Philippine government, whichever government it is, will use every trick at their command, to help up the ante in the negotiations.

I am sure you will see the same thing in Greece or in Spain or anywhere else in the world.

Q: Cliff, in terms of the comments that you have heard or editorials that you have seen, how effective, how useful were these visits to an aircraft carrier or to a base? Did it make a difference or do you think it had serious or very little impact?

SOUTHARD: It had a great deal of impact. I was just thinking a moment ago that Salvador P. Lopez is the Philippine Ambassador to the United Nations today. He had previously been the Philippine Ambassador to France, the U.K. and to the United States. He is getting to be an old man. I took him on an aircraft carrier with a group of people.

When he returned to the Embassy, we were sitting in the helicopter, flying back from the offshore carrier and he said, “Cliff, you know, here I am 72 years old”—or 71 years old, whatever it was—”I have been the Minister of Foreign Affairs of my country. I have been Ambassador all over. I have never been on one of your military bases. I have never been on a U.S. Navy ship. This is so heartwarming, such a pleasant experience for me. Isn't it funny, that in all of these 72 years that I have lived here, I have never been on one of your

bases before?" That had real effect upon him. Now he is the Ambassador to the United Nations.

Q: This is side one of the interview with Cliff Southard, it will be continued on side two.

This is March 11, 1988. I am at the house of Cliff Southard, senior foreign service officer. This is the continuation of an earlier interview started about Cliff's experiences in the Far East.

Cliff, we have reviewed together, your experiences in the Philippines. What we would like to do today is turn to your subsequent posts in Tokyo, Burma and Nigeria.

Book Translations Officer, Tokyo: 1961-'63

Maybe we ought to start with Tokyo where you were book translations officer from 1961 to 1963. What was it like?

Effectiveness Of Japan Book Program

SOUTHARD: Well, as I have often said, I still do believe that the book translations job in Tokyo was the most interesting one that I had in my entire foreign service career. I say interesting; it was interesting because I think it was the most cost effective and most personally satisfying job I ever had.

The budget was modest. I think it was something like $30,000. This was in the early 1960's. I subsidized the publication of roughly a hundred books a year—a hundred titles a year. It was certainly the lowest subsidy program—the cheapest subsidy program—of books we had anyplace in the world.

Q: What do you mean by that—the lowest cost?

SOUTHARD: We would subsidize a book for about $250 to $300 on average for an edition size of two and a half to three thousand copies. Ten cents a book is about as cheap as you can subsidize book translations anyplace. For instance, today in Latin America we are paying $5 and $6 a book per copy for subsidies.

The other equally interesting part of the job was that we had a monthly magazine. The only USIS magazine ever, that was devoted alone—totally—to books. It was called, “The Monthly Review of American Books,” in Japanese. This magazine probably—I think—was the only USIS magazine that had advertising—that carried paid advertising.

First, the magazine was an integral part of the whole book translation program, because each issue of the magazine would review fifteen new American books that we would like to see translated in Japan. The magazine went to translators. It went to publishers and distributors and the bulk of them went to university instructors—professors.

Many of the translators would read our reviews in this magazine and decide that that was a book they would like to translate. As you know, many translations flow from a translator's interest rather than a publisher's interest. Some publishers would see the reviews of these books and choose to get in touch with us. Ask us if we would like to support the publication of their translation.

The magazine itself, as I mentioned, was distributed to publishers, translators, and the primary end users were the university level instructors in the country. About half of the magazine edition was distributed by the two largest book distribution firms in the country. The two that monopolized book distribution in Japan. They went to—from us—to the distributors and from the distributors to the book retailers who had a special interest in American books or translations of American books.

The magazine had a price on it—30 yen, which was a lot less than it is today. The bookseller who eventually got the magazine at the end of the distribution line was free to

either give it to customers of his that were interested in American books, or they could sell it.

I mentioned the advertising. As you know, it is illegal for a USIS post to accept money and use it in its programming. If it accepts money, the money has to go back to the Treasury of the U.S.

There is nothing in the regulations that says you may or may not carry advertising in a USIS magazine. My device, which Washington apparently accepted, was to first have a contract with the Japanese printer who was going to print the magazine. Then, if an American or Japanese publisher wished to buy advertising space in the magazine, we developed a rate card. One whole page ad was worth the production and delivery to USIS of a thousand copies of that very issue of the magazine. Harper, for example, Harper's representative in Tokyo would send a purchase order to the printer, Tosho Insatsu for 1000 copies of the May issue of the USIS magazine, with instructions to deliver those 1000 copies to USIS for distribution.

For several months, our advertisers were paying for about half of the production costs of the magazine. Circulation of this magazine, by the way, was 10,000 copies—not a small magazine.

It was a very interesting part of a circular pattern in the whole book program, because once our subsidized translation was printed, then we would have a review of the translation, which would be carried in the magazine. The magazine normally carried fifteen reviews of new American books and reviews of fifteen new translations of American books. So, once the book was published in translation, we would give it a little additional sales promotion push by doing a review of the book.

Q: Cliff, you operated in probably one of the highest literacy societies of the world.

SOUTHARD: It is the highest.

Q: If you look at it from your perspective now, Japan is also known as the electronic society. Was there a drawback or was there competition from other media than books? In other words, did you feel, at that time you were there, that radio or even the infancy of television had an impact that would change the interest in books per se?

SOUTHARD: Certainly, television was going full blast in Japan at the time. The Japanese, however, had always been very, very heavy readers of books. It is the most literate society in the world. They produce more books, I think, per capita than any other society in the world, even today.

As a matter of fact, the number of books produced in Japan today, is roughly equal to the production of books in the United States. We think of ourselves as the biggest book producers in the world, but the Japanese, with a smaller population, produce as many titles a year as we do.

Q: What kind of titles did you produce?

SOUTHARD: Well, if you are acquainted with the USIS program, there are all sorts of titles—American literature, economics, American politics, a great deal on international politics. I remember, during that time that I was there, we did translations of two of Kissinger's books, “Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy,” for example, before Kissinger was known much elsewhere. Lots of anti-communist books, of course.

Q: Did any of the books wind up as textbooks at universities? I mean, if there were literary works or did you publish any textbooks, per se?

SOUTHARD: No. We were not in the textbook business as such, and I do not recall that any of these books became texts—possibly as reference readers in some university courses—but not as texts. I just cannot think of other titles right now.

Q: Did you have any say on the production actually in terms of make up, promotion of the books, or was this all written into a contract, so that these were quality books or were they paperbacks?

SOUTHARD: There were all kinds. We had a paperback series, with one publisher, Juji Press, that was a low priced paperback book program. We did about twenty titles a year. These tended to be more popular type books on all facets of American life.

Q: Do you recall one other thing? Do you remember the VOA Foreign series? Were any of those translated in those days?

SOUTHARD: Yes, several of them were. I think there was one Schram book on communication, VOA Forum book that I remember got translated there. There were several others.

Living In Tokyo In 1960's

Q: Tell me, cliff, what was it like to live in Tokyo at that particular time? There was pollution then, I am sure, as there is now. A lot of people felt it was difficult living in Tokyo. How was it for you and your family?

SOUTHARD: Tokyo was much less crowded then than it is today. I have been back in recent years. I would not like to live there very much today.

We enjoyed it quite a bit in the early 1960's. We did live in those Embassy ghetto apartments. I think we were up in about the sixth floor of a lovely apartment building. All of which have been torn down to build even larger apartment buildings, which are there now. Those you see today are not those that were there in the 1960's, but those in the 1960's were very attractive buildings.

I had two children, my number two and number three daughters who were both born in Tokyo. This was during the period preparatory to the Olympics—the 1964 Olympics. Tokyo was adding considerably to its subway system, then.

Our children were born in the Seventh Day Adventist hospital, which was on the far side of town. The streets were so ripped up at night with the underground construction, that both of these births had to be induced. My wife reminds me from the far bedroom that we also had three children living in a two-bedroom apartment in that ghetto. One baby lived in a closet.

Q: Excuse me. Would you go to work by car or did you take the subway?

SOUTHARD: The Embassy housing area was not more than five or six blocks from the Embassy and from the Manchurian Railway building, the Mantetsu Biru, which was the building that included USIS and the consulate. You could easily walk to work or, in those days and I think even yet today, the Embassy maintains a little shuttle bus, that runs back and forth.

Q: Did you make a lot of friends in the Japanese community? You must have had close contact, certainly amongst publishers and intellectuals.

SOUTHARD: I had a lot of good close relationships with publishers and professors. Many of the professors tended to be the translators. As a matter of fact, I was back in Tokyo in 1986, 26 years after I was working there in this program, having dinners and social meetings with many of the same publishers that I worked with in the early 1960's.

Q: Let me ask you though, so many times we have experience in overseas posts that entertaining has been very much of a—dominantly a one way street. We entertained, but depending on the society, hardly ever got to see the homes of our hosts. Was that true in Tokyo, too?

SOUTHARD: In Tokyo you seldom saw any Japanese home. It is a custom among Japanese to entertain even their own Japanese friends in restaurants or public buildings. My wife on the other hand was invited to several Japanese homes by Japanese wives who used her as an English teacher.

I recall only a couple of Japanese homes that I visited in the whole time—but, that is not unusual. Japanese homes are very small and are not really built for grand entertaining.

Q: Tell me, how much travel did you do while you were in Japan?

SOUTHARD: I made a few trips. The Japanese publishing industry is essentially centered in Tokyo. In those days, there was little outside of Tokyo. I did make a trip down to the southern part of the country, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Nagoya and then took vacations in other places, at my own expense, most to Hakone. I saw more of Japan as an inspector many years later than I saw when I worked there the first time.

Q: Cliff, maybe what we ought to do is change our venue a little bit and go to Burma. You were there in 1966 and stayed until 1969. You were a country PAO in Burma during a very interesting time. I suppose that between Tokyo and Burma there was a Washington tour. Unless you want to touch on the Washington tour and what transpired, how did it go in Burma?

SOUTHARD: Just to pick up the interim, I was in ICS as deputy chief of the publications division, which is the book translations division, after leaving Tokyo and before going to Burma.

Ne Win's Burma SOUTHARD 1966

In Burma, we arrived there several years after the Ne Win (General Ne Win) socialist revolution. He pulled a coup in 1962 and kicked Premier U Nu out of the country and put in

place a military dictatorship. He also declared that Burma would be absolutely neutral and would have as little to do with foreign governments as possible.

One of the first things he did was to order all of the foreign libraries in the country closed. It takes quite a while to get a message across to Americans, like us, because when I went there in 1966, we still had an American librarian on the payroll, hoping that—during those four years—hoping that Ne Win would change his mind. The library did not exist, of course, but we had the librarian waiting in the wings.

One of the first things after I got there was the unhappy chore of conducting a large reduction in force, to bring the size of the organization down to an appropriate size for a post whose every effort was now being very closely scrutinized by the host government. As I say, the hopeful ones in USIA had still maintained a staff to close to sixty or seventy people, when really only about thirty were required.

As I said, my first job was this reduction in force, also, removing several of the American positions that were there, including the librarian position which was then held by Zelma Graham. She was one of the all time great USIS librarians.

Burma's Stifling Government Censorship

Q: Cliff, the Ne Win policies that were instituted, did that imply that basically your efforts had to be directed or confined to primarily government contacts, rather than trying to make contact with the population at large?

SOUTHARD: What it meant was that everything that we did was censored. Every word in our local magazine or in pamphlets that would be brought in from RSC or produced in our own shop, had to be read and approved. Then, after having to have it read and approved prior to publication, every copy had to have an approved Burmese government stamp—a Ministry of Information stamp—before it could be distributed.

Furthermore, when it was distributed, you had to take the pamphlet or the magazine and the envelope, which also had an approved stamp on it, to the post office where the material would be inserted in the envelope and sealed in the presence of officials from the Ministry of Information. There was no particular inhibition upon who we could put upon the mailing list.

However, everything that was mailed, had to pass through the Ministry of Information's hands. They knew exactly who was getting the material and they felt no compunction in just throwing things in the waste basket, if they did not want any specific item sent to a person. Sometimes they would just simply—after accepting them at the post office and taking our postage—destroy the mail.

Q: I never realized that the U.S. government would submit to this kind of censorship. In your experience, were there actually instances where texts were changed, or where there was a prohibition against a certain magazine, or a paragraph within a magazine, where the government took umbrage with what we had written?

SOUTHARD: Yes. I remember one case in our magazine, we were serializing Sorensen's book on Kennedy's 1000 days. [This may be an erroneous reference. Sorensen wrote The Word War; Schlesinger wrote The 1000 Days.] When we sent the magazine's manuscript to the Ministry of Information, they okayed it, in manuscript form. After we set it in type, we were called one day, and told that this paragraph, that paragraph and another paragraph cannot appear in the magazine. I thought I would kind of stick it to them. So, we printed the magazine, 7000 copies of it with the white space showing where the deleted paragraphs were shown on the page. I thought this would embarrass them. Obviously, every reader who gets this is going to know what happened.

Of course, through other means of determining what of our materials actually did get distributed, we learned they distributed not a single copy of that magazine. So, old smartass outsmarted himself.

Q: Cliff, in knowing what the conditions were, I mean, what amounted to a defacto submission to censorship under this government, what was the Agency's attitude toward it? Did you get any instruction from Washington saying it is not worthwhile doing it? Or —unless you can get a text in "as is," do not publish it or try? What was the attitude of Washington toward this type of an operation?

SOUTHARD: I cannot remember any—this was going on before I got there and it has been going on ever since I was there. I cannot remember any specific message from Washington that condoned it, but certainly USIA was eager to get anything out that it could get out. They accepted the other government's right to do this and certainly did not dispute it in any specific sort of way.

Q: Did the question of censorship, which is of course a very real thing to Americans in terms of freedom of the press, ever become a subject for bilateral discussion at the diplomatic level? By the Ambassador? Was the foreign office in Washington, the State Department, calling in the Burmese Ambassador?

SOUTHARD: I do not recall any specific meetings. Obviously every foreign government in Burma was treated alike. The Soviets accepted the same thing and so did every government that had an embassy there. We found that playing—by going through the rules—that we got a hell of a lot of material distributed. Again, every film that came into the country had to be censored, too, and approved. Furthermore, once it was approved, you could only show it in you own homes. You could not give it to any organization. It had to be shown on U.S. government premises to Burmese—invited Burmese guests.

Q: What happened, for example, to an Ampart if he were to give a lecture? Did he have to submit a—

SOUTHARD: They did not permit any Amparts to come into the country.

Q: So, that eliminated the problem.

SOUTHARD: There were no Amparts in the country. Well, we could occasionally get sporting events and individuals. The Dallas Tornado came there. An AAU track and field team came once. The pro-golfer, Paul Harney, came twice. He was a great favorite of General Ne Win, who liked to play golf with him. Harney was there again just two years ago, twenty years later. Ne Win is still asking him to come play golf with him.

We had the American College of Cardiologists, but the normal Ampart simply was not permitted in those days. No American ever went on the campus of the University of Rangoon for a period of about ten years.

Fulbright Exchanges Forbidden

Q: What about Fulbright activity—exchanges—Burmese going to the U.S.?

SOUTHARD: None came to the United States; they simply abrogated the Fulbright agreement. We had a Fulbright organization. Again, as I say, we were terribly optimistic. After the Burmese clearly said that they did not want a Fulbright program and would permit no Burmese to go to the U.S. or Americans to come to Burma, we maintained the structure of the Fulbright organization, three employees, and provided space to them. USIS provided space to them.

Their only business was in renting little Volkswagens bugs, which they had acquired during the earlier Fulbright days. They were provided as part of the grants to the visiting American Fulbright students and professors. They ended up, when the program was closed, with about eight Volkswagen bugs. For years and years, the only income for the Fulbright organization was renting these Volkswagen bugs to official Americans who came to the Embassy without diplomatic passports and could not import automobiles.

Q: Tell me, Cliff, what you describe is somewhat almost like a curtain fell on Burma. You were living behind this certain kind of a curtain, I do not know whether it was a bamboo curtain, a rice curtain or however you described it. The Burmese, on the other hand, are known to be a gentle and friendly people. What did it do to your personal relations with the people in Rangoon or in Burma? Could you travel? Could you meet people? Were they reluctant to have anything to do with it?

SOUTHARD: They were very reluctant. Keep in mind, the Burmese government's design was to eliminate, or try to eliminate, personal relationships between the Burmese people—and particularly the officials of the Burmese government and foreigners. There are always, in every society, some Burmese who are absolutely, as you say, the most pleasant and friendly people that I have know.

In any society such as this, there were some Burmese, usually businessmen, who had been expropriated by the socialist government or academics, who had not been able to go along with the change, who became estranged from their own government, but who had done nothing bad enough to get them put in jail. They are the people that chose to have relationships with the members of the foreign embassies that came into the country. We knew quite a few of these people. Many of them live right here in the Washington area now, whom we still see socially, as recently as two weeks ago.

Q: They were part of the dissident community, as we say?

SOUTHARD: They were dissident, but in terms of a revolutionary government, they were relatively harmless. They were permitted to mix freely with the foreign community and eventually were permitted, in many cases, to emigrate.

There is one other thing. Government controlled all of the media except book publishing. We did an active business for the first couple of years in book translations, until the

government finally discovered that this was an area that they had forgotten. Then they started insisting that every translation manuscript be approved by the government censors.

Censorship Extended To Social Invitations

For my first party I invited something like twenty people from the Ministry of Information, newspapers the government owned, magazines, the radio station—Burmese radio. We prepared quite a bit of food. Only six or eight people came. It was something of a surprise and I was offended, because no one called to say they were not coming. I suppose it was designed by the Ministry to show the new boy in town how things worked.

The next day I called to make an appointment with the Information Secretary—Burma had the British secretariat system. The Minister was a colonel who really did not know much about information. I told him that I was terribly irked. I had a lot of wasted food from the previous night. I invited twenty people from his outfit and only six people came, including him by the way. I said, “Is it just that these people cannot come or what is the reason for this? Can't they tell me they are not coming?”

He said, “Mr. Southard, let me tell you something. I decided who goes to all the social events sponsored by foreign embassies. I decide—that is, who in the Ministry of Information is going to go and who is not going to go. I have, right here in front of your nose, this stamp. It says, 'You may go,' and here is another stamp that says, 'You may not go.' Sometimes I do not stamp them at all. Here's another one—'You must go.'”

He said, “I advise you not to try to distribute all of these invitations to the people that you want to come to your place. Prepare all the invitations and have your chief Burmese assistant bring the whole stack of envelopes to me and I will tell you how many people are going to be coming to your affairs in advance. Then you will not have any wasted food.”

Now, of course, it must seem like an affront. We were not free to invite to our homes anyone that we liked. That is the way you had to do it in order to be successful in the business.

I must say that what had started out as a monthly meeting with about 15 of the officials of the Ministry of Information, when I left three and a half years later, he was permitting about ninety people to come to my home. It grew to such an extent that instead of the fourth Friday of every month we had to do it the fourth Friday and the fourth Saturday of every month, in order to fit all of the officials into my house that he would permit to come. He just raised the ante each year a little bit. First fifteen would come and then twenty and then twenty-five and more and more. Finally, by the time I left, we were getting a tremendous number of acceptances.

If I had tried to go on my own and say, “I'm not going to screw around with this guy and let him decide who is going to come to my house,” I would probably never gotten more than six or seven people. Most people, most subordinates would be afraid to act on their own. They would be afraid if they accepted on their own and came that they would be found out and disciplined. You had to work through the hierarchy in order to get to the people you wanted to talk to.

Q: Do you have by any chance, any playback from your successor whether, when you left, the number reverted again to a very few and went up again or what happened?

SOUTHARD: This is interesting. Harold McConeghey was my successor. I left Burma in 1969 and went back in 1971 on a trip. The same colonel was still the Secretary of the Ministry of Information and he complained to me that Mr. McConeghey was not inviting as many people. (laughter)

He said, “Has your representation budget been reduced? Because, I have a lot of people who want to go to his house and he is simply not sending that many invitations out. (laughter)

Q: It worked the other way.

SOUTHARD: I might say, by the way, that this same man had developed a very, very high respect for and was a fan of Winston Churchill, so you found the USIS PAO presenting books about Winston Churchill to him in order to get along.

I inspected Burma in 1978. At this point the good colonel was out of a job having been implicated in a coup—in unsuccessful coup plotting. There was no coup attempt, but about thirty officers in 1976 were kicked out of the government and out of the military for having been accused of doing some coup plotting. Colonel Tin Tun was one of those that got knocked out of the government. When I saw him in 1978, he had two little Isuzu trucks and was running a pick up delivery service. (laughter)

Q: Entrepreneur.

SOUTHARD: Entrepreneur, yes.

Q: How did your family fare during that time?

SOUTHARD: It was our most delightful post. It was the only post where all four of our daughters were at the post at the same time—all in school. The housing was grand. Houses were enormous and lovely. Of course, the water went off every day and the electricity went off every day, but we still enjoyed it very, very much.

I had some very excellent USIS officers who were there with me and I worked for two excellent ambassadors, Henry Byroade and Arthur Hummel. Arthur Hummel became my

first ambassador who had been a former USIA officer. Later, John Reinhardt was another former USIA officer who I worked for as an ambassador.

Q: Rumor has it that when you were in Burma, you had a boat.

SOUTHARD: Yes.

Q: Did you sail in the open ocean or—

SOUTHARD: No. In the center of Rangoon there are two large manmade lakes developed by the British. We lived at the northernmost end of the northern lake, Inya Lake. I was able to buy a sixteen foot sailboat for $100. I sailed it. We used to keep it at a little pier right in front of our house. I would come home from the office at night and get in the sailboat with my kids, get a jar of martinis and go floating around the lake, waiting for the cook to make dinner. I used it for three and a half years and sold it for $100. (laughter)

Decision To Retain USIS Even In Face OfDifficulties Was Wise

Q: Cliff, to wind up Burma, in retrospect, you were there during a very difficult time in terms of USIS business. In your judgment, should we have maintained the operation or, seeing the limitations that were imposed on us, should we have maybe closed the post?

SOUTHARD: No, we certainly did the right thing. Today the Burmese orientation is solidly in the direction of the United States. In those days, they did their very best to be neutral. Most of the Burmese, I think, even in the government wanted to lean toward the West. The socialist military government had some communists in it and they were eager to have them look toward the East. We were there competing with the Soviets and the Chinese. I think the steady USIS effort which was quite significant eventually paid off. Today, we even have an AID program that is underway. AID was kicked out of the country during the time we were there.

Lagos, Nigeria Southard: 1973-'74

Q: We are going to cover Cliff's Nigerian experience. He was PAO in Nigeria from 1973 to 1974, a relatively short tour cut short by medical problems. Cliff, what was the emphasis of your program in Nigeria?

SOUTHARD: It was a very large program. We had three branch offices at Kano, Kaduna and Ibadan. We had a very nice large library in Lagos. We had one of the few remaining one country magazines. We had a very active cultural program. Lots of leader grants, lots of Amparts, lots of lecturers coming into the country.

Pete Peters was the cultural affairs officer and he had a wide circle of contacts. This was at a time when AID—the aid program—was being phased out altogether in the country. We were sending as many as thirty or forty leaders to the U. S. each year.

Now, at that pace, you soon run out of university professors and other academics and the usual fare of leaders grantees so we were being used by the Embassy to take Nigerian businessmen. In some cases, we were bringing in businessmen with the additional hope of —we even had a commercial angle—developing buyers for American products.

That was the second time I had worked as a PAO under an ambassador who had been a former USIA officer, John Reinhardt, who as you know, later became the director of USIA itself, not long after he left that job in Nigeria, as a matter of fact.

Q: Let me ask you, in the information field, what was the emphasis or what did you do there?

SOUTHARD: We had Nigerian television which was a state-owned operation, as was Nigerian radio. We obviously developed contacts with the national Nigerian TV people, placed films on television, provided other materials to Nigerian national radio. There were

several newspapers in the country. We had a very active wireless file and feature service for the newspapers and magazines—newspapers particularly.

Special Effectiveness Of VOA Bureau In Lagos

We had a VOA bureau in Nigeria. A VOA African service in English, which was one of the most useful tools in the whole information apparatus that we had at our command. The local VOA correspondent would send at least one story each day to Washington to the African service.

I was so impressed, as was John Reinhardt, that a news story we would send out from Lagos around noontime Lagos time would be played back to us in English to Africa while we were having our martinis at 5:00 o'clock or 5:30 in the afternoon. It was a very, very responsive thing.

During the time that we were there, of course, we had the 1973 war in the Middle East, with the embargoes of shipments of oil. I have always been rather proud that during that period the Nigerians did not stop shipping oil to us. We worked very hard to make sure that they did not stop shipping the oil to us.

Also, thinking of that short war the Nigerians broke relations with Israel. The Southard family benefited from this significantly, because the Israeli Ambassador and his wife, whom we knew well, left their cook and bearer to the Southard's. Their cook was the best in the country. That cook, that Nigerian cook, was the best cook that we had in the entire foreign service career. He fed me all sorts of buttery things that ended up hastening my departure from Nigeria with a heart problem—a coronary problem.

Q: Nigeria has a very respective, very heterogeneous society and population. There was internal civil wars there. Did that make it difficult to run an operation in Nigeria, as opposed to a country where there was a homogeneous society?

SOUTHARD: Well, as you know, there are three main tribal groups in Nigeria, the Hausa in the northern part of the country (we had two branch posts in their part of the country); the Yoruba who were in the southern part and the Ibo in the east. It was the Ibos who in the earlier war—the Biafra war—had tried to secede.

At the time that we were there, we did not have branch post representation in the Ibo part of the country. Largely because the Ibos were somewhat suspect and still were not getting a fair shake from the Hausa and the Yoruba who were running the country.

General Gowon was neither one of the three, but he was chosen as a compromise from a very small tribe. He was thought to be a unifier because he was not identified with either of the two dominant groups.

Eventually, in the years beginning about 1975—from that time on—the country has been under the control of the Hausa who are numerically superior.

Q: Cliff, one question here. Did we have any USIS officers who spoke the tribal dialects?

SOUTHARD: No.

Q: So we had to work—

SOUTHARD: —and I doubt very much that today in 1988 we have anyone in Nigeria who speaks any of the three languages. English is the national language of the country, of course.

Q: I am asking this, because at the Voice of America in the African division, there are various individuals who spoke and do speak the respective languages of their tribe. But the broadcast that you incidentally noticed was the English version, not the Hausa—

SOUTHARD: No, in Nigeria it was the English service that was very, very well listened to. I have been in two countries where VOA really proved itself to me. Burma was one. In

Burma, it happened to be the Burmese language service that had fantastic listenership in that country.

English to Africa was a very, very important information tool for the United States. If I had ever had any suspicions about whether people listened to shortwave radio before I went to Burma and Nigeria, those suspicions were certainly quelled by what I saw in both of those countries.

Head Of USIA Inspection Staff; Interest And Values

Q: Cliff, part of your Agency experience has been as an inspector. You have served from senior inspector to the Inspector General of the Agency. That must not only have been a fascinating assignment, but must have given you various insights and, possibly also, some personal satisfaction. Would you like to comment on that?

SOUTHARD: First, keep in mind that I was not Inspector General: I was the Chief Inspector. The inspector general title has come along since. The Inspector General is one who is there as a representative of congress, as well, and I think his nomination has to be approved by the senate. The Chief Inspector was responsible only to the director of the Agency.

Yes, it was enjoyable. I had mentioned earlier that being books officer in Japan was probably my most interesting job. Certainly the inspection staff was the second most interesting. I was a PAO three times, but none of the PAO jobs were as interesting as these two.

I got a chance on the inspection staff to—I think I have done 44 country inspections during the total of nearly five years that I was on the inspection staff. All around the world. I found this fascinating. First because you would go to a post and find that they were doing things that were not half as clever or half as good as what you had seen done at other posts,

or maybe what you would have done yourself at another post. So, you could impart this knowledge. Why don't you do it this way? It worked for me or it works at that post.

Also, you would go to some posts where you would find that they were doing it better than you had ever done it yourself or that you had seen it done anywhere else. So, it was this—then you were able to learn something from the process and pass it on to other posts.

Q: Cross fertilization?

SOUTHARD: Yes, in a very complete way. Also, I found that it was, I feel, the very best training to be a PAO. The Agency has never been able to come up with a training program for public affairs officers. I have even been involved in a couple of experiments to try to figure out some training program. There is no program that works that I have seen, except working on an inspection staff for a couple of years, when you see how everybody else does things and you retain the best and purge your mind of the lousy way of doing things, and develop built-in guards to make sure that you do not do things the lousy ways.

Q: Cliff, let me ask you a question. Early on was there an institutional way that the Agency had to share the good? Once you saw a post and there was something they did exceptionally well, how was this shared world wide or area wide with the rest of the posts?

SOUTHARD: It really—it was not widely shared. As you know, the inspection reports tended to be classified, limited use—and certainly limited circulation. These ideas would appear in the—would be triggered in the inspection reports themselves. Personnel and the Agency's management have always felt that it was not terribly necessary for any other than those intimately involved in the inspection process to have access to the report themselves.

It was a desire to make sure that criticisms of a particular post or a particular occupant of a position were not read by other people, and certainly not become part of a personnel

evaluation system. So, there was a sort of built-in inhibition to wider publicity about what worked and what did not work.

Q: But, in your inspection staff, you did not have anybody who would mine these reports for nuggets that could then be declassified and shared Agency wide?

SOUTHARD: No, there was no objection to this. The inspectors were rather proud of what they did. Their reports reflected their points of view. There was no pressure within the inspection staff not to have this information disseminated, it was in other parts of the Agency. The area director of the PAO at Post “X” was not eager to see one of his deficiencies—or his program's deficiencies—read by everybody else in the agency. Of course, they liked to see all the good things disseminated, but not the deficiencies.

Q: Yes, but I was really concentrating more on the good things. In other words, the sharing of the good things with others with experience.

SOUTHARD: Then, that would flow from that which could be accomplished by those who had access to the reports, Area directors certainly, and PAO's, all of the people at the post being inspected, and the management of the Agency. John Reinhardt and Director Keogh before him, read every word of every inspection report that was done. That certainly has not been the case in recent years.

The Things An Inspection Team Looks For

Q: In your experience, Cliff, when you schedule a post for inspection what are you looking for? What is your approach to an inspection? Is it a general evaluation? Are there preconceived ideas about a post before you go in? We are all human, after all. Have you heard things or rumors? What are you trying to accomplish?

SOUTHARD: I think the first thing was to determine whether a post had set out its objectives clearly—whether they had good objectives. Not often would an inspection staff

take issue with the country plan or with the objectives that had been established by the post and approved by the Agency, as such.

Occasionally you would find places where you thought the country plan was wrong—not often. What you were really there to do was—more importantly—to look at the plan they had, the objectives that had been established and then just to see how well they were achieving or striving to achieve the objectives.

Other issues were quite subordinate to that one—to see how effectively they were following the plan. Subordinate to that, while you were there, you might find a few other personality problems—problems having to do with personnel or with organization—but you were not there trying to ferret those things out. They would become apparent. But, you were there seeing how effectively they were prosecuting the plan that they themselves had established.

Q: In your experience, Cliff, were there any cases, and I am not looking for any names or countries, but were there any places where a post's problem in executing the country program was relationship with the Embassy?

SOUTHARD: Oh, yes, quite often. There was also one area where USIS posts consistently got bad marks, and I am sure they do still today. It may be even worse today. That is in the audience that they identified. Was it the right audience?

I think I can honestly say there is not a post in the world, including all those where I have been PAO, that I could not go today and illustrate, very dramatically, that in a few cases at least you have wrong audience members on your list. We are spending money on the wrong people, and have not even identified some of the right people.

This was the most dramatic result of 43 or 44 country inspection I did; that no post has ever really identified its audience clearly and well.

Q: Let me be a little bit a devil's advocate. Right or wrong audience depends on your point of view, doesn't it? —from your point of departure. How do you tell what is the right audience, what is the wrong audience, especially in an age where the Agency has vacillated between personal contact and mass communication, in terms of audience. Doesn't that all play into it?

SOUTHARD: I think in recent years, of course, there has been more push toward a mass audience that is, the infatuation with WorldNet television—not always with radio. But, when we are doing an ARS—the ARS is very much a part of the country plan analysis. You make an analysis of the audience with the idea that those resources that you can control the delivery of should be targeted carefully—you should know who you are aiming at. In most countries, an academic audience is desirable. What is an academic audience? It goes from the presidents of universities down to some high school students some place. All I am saying is that in too many countries the ARS analysis, the audience listing, misses the university president and picks up the high school senior.

It was in London a couple years ago, where they had a whole bunch of locomotive engineers—they called them locomotive drivers—on the mailing list for Dialogue Magazine, when they were missing many very top academics at Cambridge and Oxford.You can test this easily just by getting the catalogs from Cambridge and Oxford and finding who is on the ARS list and who is not on the list, but then you would find a housewife from Yorkshire who is getting Dialogue Magazine.

I do not mean to poke fun at USIS in the UK. It was just the most recent inspection I did, in 1985. I have seen that in every country I have ever gone to.

Q: That raises the question with the self-selective audience, doesn't it? Because, chances are, these names that you just described do not come out of a hat, they have written—

SOUTHARD: They have written in and asked to be put on the mailing list and they got put there. The mistake was in putting them there—just because they wrote in.

Q: So you do not believe in responding to audience requests?

SOUTHARD: Yes, but I believe in identifying who I WANT to talk to. I want to decide who we should communicate with. I do not want the audience to decide who I should communicate with. That is pretty obvious, isn't it?

Q: That is a point of departure, but, you know, it evolved over a period of time.

SOUTHARD: In radio you cannot decide who is going to listen to you, but when you have a magazine you can decide, and you are stupid if you do not decide. If you let the audience decide who is going to take your dollar and twenty-five cent magazine, you are making a big mistake. You should decide where that $1.25 is going to be spent specifically.

Q: How about the question of individual personal contact? Is that a major problem? With what Ed Murrow used to call "the last three inches?"

SOUTHARD: You mean as a world wide issue of the inspection process? No, I think, the audience that you can communicate with directly and personally, is perforce, smaller than the audience that you deal with through direct mail. I think our people, in most countries, have identified that top audience for personal contact quite well and execute quite well.

It is that middle area where, as—what is the terminology—it is the secondary audience that I think we do not do well in identifying. Too often we put on the list the housewife who writes in and says, "I saw this in my local library and it is such a beautiful magazine, please sent it to me."

In London you had a local employee who was putting those names on the list without reference to anybody in the American staff, and with an American supervisor who thought that was the way it ought to be done.

Q: Cliff, let me ask you a question. I am again playing the devil's advocate. In personal contact work, have you found that USIS officers, over the years, have moved away from what I would call doing their homework and being substantive, well informed, that they tend to call for an Ampart rather than be able to stand up and lead a discussion or be persuasive themselves? What is your judgment on that?

The Rise, And Perhaps Decline, Of Personal Contact Activity

SOUTHARD: During the course of my career, I would say, in the 1950's and the 1960's, there was relatively less personal contact, than in the periods which followed. In the late 1960's and the early 1970's, I think that our officers made every effort to learn all of the issues and communicate them directly.

I think that peaked in maybe the early 1970's. In the 1970's and the 1980's, I do believe that we have—that our officers have tended to call for help. If you have a problem, look for an Ampart to come and say it. Perhaps less interest in being an advocate ourselves.

Maybe what has happened is that having developed the Ampart program to the state that it is today, that it has permitted us to ease off. Why inflict work upon yourself or why use your own limited knowledge of a subject as an advocate when you can call on the phone and find some guy—some professor—who knows ten times as much as you know about a subject—or eight times as much as the guy you are trying to convince.

Q: Of course, you know, that has been an issue that has been debated quite a bit because sometimes the Amparts, of course are—

SOUTHARD: Not so good, right?

Q: —either. And the other question is that your own contacts ultimately start to look at you more as an impresario than somebody to turn to and talk to, which is maybe the drawback of this particular issue. What about the question of mass media over the time?

SOUTHARD: I do not have a strong opinion about WorldNet because I have never been able to determine just what it costs. Even the last year or so that I was in the Agency, I was not able to determine how much the WorldNet operation cost. But, I must say, in my last post, we did not use the WorldNet programming.

As an inspector in 1985, after I retired, in England, I did observe one televised program. I do not think it was called WorldNet—Euronet or something, where Chester Crocker of the State Department, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, discussed southern Africa with an audience of about 25 British print and electronic journalists in what I thought was a great show—I watched it go on for an hour and a half.

I was just flabbergasted at the fact that, here we had a very talented American spokesman, dealing with a subject he knew backwards and forwards, in intimate contact with a topnotch journalistic audience in England, answering questions right and left. Then I saw the results of this. The articles in the newspapers. The footage on TV—news on TV—was quite an impressive thing. But, I had no idea what it cost.

Q: Of course, that was what the Agency described as an electronic dialogue on a specific issue. Those have been, in my experience also in the field, terribly effective if they are well planned and brought on.

That is somewhat different than trying to put out every day “X” number of hours of a WorldNet program, you know. It is quite different and more difficult even to get the media to focus on it every day that they receive it either as a video cassette or on their tube.

This completes our interview with Clifford Southard.

End of interview